

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0017

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TAGS: PINT, PE

SUBJECT: APRA CELEBRATES ITS 50TH BIRTHDAY

REF: LIMA 1570

1. SUMMARY: LARGE CROWD OF APRA (ALIANZA POPULAR REVOLUCIONARIA AMERICANA) SUPPORTERS HEARD PARTY CHIEF HAYA DE LA TORRE'S ENERGETIC ATTACK ON LACK OF ELECTIONS AND COMMUNIST THREAT DURING 50TH ANNIVERSARY RALLY. END SUMMARY

2. SEMICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF APRA'S FOUNDING ON MAY 7 DREW PREDOMINANTLY YOUNG AND BLUE-COLLAR CROWD OF OVER 8,000 WHO RESPONDED ENTHUSIASTICALLY TO JIBES AT THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT AND CALLS FOR ELECTIONS. HAYA DE LA TORRE, NOW 79, DEMONSTRATED HIS REMARKABLE CONTINUED VITALITY AS A CROWD-PLEASER AND SPELLBINDING ORATOR. ALTHOUGH MUCH OF HIS SPEECH DEALT WITH APRA'S HISTORICAL ROLE IN LATIN AMERICA, HAYA CLEVERLY WOVE INTO IT MANY POIGNANT CRITICISMS OF THE MILITARY JUNTA, A THEME WHICH WAS TAKEN UP BY CHORUSES OF DISCIPLINED APRA YOUTH WHO CHANTED ANTI-MILGOV SLOGANS. ANOTHER HAYA TARGET WAS COMMUNIST IMPERIALISM AND ITS THREAT TO LATIN AMERICA IN THE FORM OF STATE CAPITALISM WHICH ENSLAVES THE CITIZEN AND WHOSE INFLUENCE IN PERU HAS INCREASED THROUGH THE

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DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL COMMUNIST CADRE ("COMUNISTAS CRIOLLOS").

HE REITERATED HIS CALL FOR A RETURN TO FREE SUFFRAGE, AND SUGGESTED THAT MUNICIPAL LEVEL ELECTION SHOULD BE AN APPROPRIATE OPENER, TO DEMONSTRATE WHERE THE PEOPLE'S SYMPATHIES LIE.

3. APRA CHIEF GAVE THE MILGOV LESS CONCILIATORY TREATMENT THAN IN HIS FEBRUARY 22 SPEECH (SEE REFTEL). ALTHOUGH ADMITTING THAT MUCH OF APRA'S TRADITIONAL PROGRAM HAS NOW BECOME GOVERNMENT POLICY, WHICH HE LAUDED, HE NONETHELESS ACCUSED JUNTA OF TRYING TO "SHAMELESSLY DISGUISE IT AS THEIR OWN." HE ALSO REFERRED TO ALLEGED INFLUENCE OF THE YUGOSLAV EXPERIENCE ON MILGOV THINKING, AND CHIDED MILITARY FOR BORROWING FROM OTHERS WITHOUT ADMITTING IT BECAUSE "THEY HAVE NO IDEAS OF THEIR OWN." HAYA'S CRITICISM OF JUNTA RECEIVED MOST ENTHUSIASTIC APPLAUSE.

4. RALLY WAS CHARACTERIZED BY TRADITIONAL APRISTA DISCIPLINE AND CAREFUL ORGANIZATION. THERE WERE REPRESENTATIVES FROM SEVERAL LATIN AMERICAN PARTIES, INCLUDING PRI OF MEXICO, LIBERALS OF COLOMBIA, FEBRERISTAS OF PARAGUAY, PLN OF COSTA RICA, AND OTHERS. HOWEVER, VENEZUELAN DELEGATE, JAIME LUSSINCHE, INTRODUCED AS AD MAJORITY LEADER IN THE VENEZUELAN CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES, WAS PAID EXTRAORDINARY TRIBUTE. ON AT LEAST SEVERAL OCCASIONS, MASTER OF CEREMONIES WHIPPED UP ENTHUSIASTIC POPULAR OVATIONS FOR LUSSINCHE, PRESIDENT PEREZ AND AD. HE WAS PRESENTED, ON BEHALF OF PRESIDENT PEREZ, THE GOLD MEDAL OF APRA'S SEMICENTENNIAL AND ANOTHER AWARD.

5. THE RALLY INCLUDED LESS NOTEWORTHY SPEECHES BY TWO APRISTAS, CARLOS ROCA, A YOUTH LEADER, AND LAWYER CARLOS MANUEL COX. PRESS COVERAGE BY MODERATE "LA PRENSA" WAS STRAIGHTFORWARD.

6. COMMENT: APRA AGAIN DEMONSTRATED ITS STRENGTH AND STAYING POWER. FACT THAT ABOUT 80 PERCENT OF LAST NIGHT'S CROWD WERE MEN (AND A FEW WOMEN) BETWEEN 18 AND 35 ILLUSTRATES PARTY'S CONSISTENT ATTRACTION FOR YOUTH, DESPITE INCESSANT LEFTIST AND GOVERNMENT PROPAGANDA ACCUSING THE PARTY OF STALENESS. NOR HAVE LEFTIST ALLEGATIONS THAT APRA IS ALLIED TO U.S. IMPERIALISM AND OTHER IMAGINED REACTIONARY ENEMIES OF PERUVIAN WORKING CLASS MADE AN APPARENT IMPACT ON PARTY'S DRAWING POWER.

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7. SPECIAL ATTENTION PAID TO VENEZUELAN REPRESENTATIVE IS ANOTHER MANIFESTATION OF LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN TRADITIONALLY CLOSE TIES BETWEEN AD AND APRA, WHICH WILL BE REPORTED BY AIRGRAM.
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